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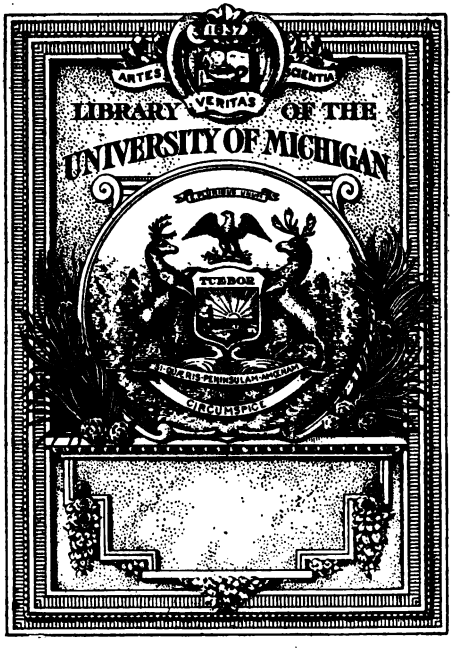
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THE WELFARE OF EGYPT

By
J. Selden Willmore

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
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The Welfare of Egypt.

SINCE the first days of the war German agents have been busy in Egypt attempting to stir up a revolt against English authority in that country. We learn from official publications that in the month of September, 1914, a letter was seized on a Turkish naval officer in which it was stated that he was endeavouring to bring about a strike amongst Moslem stokers and engineers on the Khedivial mail steamers, which were at that time being used as transports for British troops, and that an attempt would be made to sink the vessels after these troops had embarked.

A certain Robert Casimir Otto Mors, who was employed in the Alexandria City Police, was arrested in that town about the same time on account of his suspicious movements, and on him was seized a bag containing detonators for bombs. His arrest led to the following revelations. On a visit which he had recently made to Constantinople he had had an interview with Enver Pasha and Sheikh Shawish, who for a long period previously to the war had been carrying on intrigues against the English administration in Egypt. He was given to understand by Enver Pasha that there were agents in Egypt "fomenting trouble to prepare the way for a Turkish invasion and

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to compel the British to split up their forces." Means were discussed by which these objects might be furthered, and Mors was furnished with a secret code by which he might correspond from Egypt with Dr. Prüfter, a German agent in Constantinople.

His Majesty's Consul at Aleppo reported that a tailor in that town had been commissioned to prepare a variety of Indian costumes and head-dresses according to designs and measurements supplied by German officers there. The object of this was obvious, seeing that Indian troops were being drafted to Egypt and that it might be possible for German agents to intermingle with them and sow among them the seeds of revolt.

At the same time false news was disseminated throughout the Moslem world to the effect that a revolution had already taken place in India. The German ambassador at Constantinople was instructed from Berlin to publish this far and wide. In a telegram despatched to all parts of the Turkish Empire it was announced that, owing to the discontent reigning among the Moslem population of India, it had been found impossible to send any Indian troops to Egypt. Later on it was asserted that the Emir of Afghanistan had declared a Holy War against Great Britain, and it was stated by His Majesty's Consul at Aleppo that the Moslems in that district "are reported to have been so inveigled and incited by German and

Turkish deliberate official misrepresentations and falsehoods of every kind that the masses seem to believe that the German Emperor has embraced the Islamic faith."

By means of these intrigues and false and malicious statements Germany hoped to stir up disorders among the populations of India and Egypt and in particular to induce the inhabitants of the latter country to believe that England's difficulties in the Far East would make it impossible for her to offer any effective resistance to a German or Turkish invasion of the country and to prepare them to welcome their armies as soon as they appeared at the gate. But the plot was doomed to fail; no revolution took place in India, and the Egyptians have shown themselves too well-contented with the British administration of their country to wish to exchange it for German rule or to see that of Turkey again established in the Valley of the Nile. They may desire to be independent of all foreign rule, but they are shrewd enough to understand that it would be impossible to better their cause by submitting to the dictation of a Kaiser who has said of his own country: "Only one is master. That is I. Who opposes me I shall crush to pieces." Nor can they wish to see the restoration of a Government under which bribery and corruption were paramount.

Speaking as one long resident in the country. I assert that this is the present feeling of the very great majority of the Mussulmans; and the

Copts and Syrians, who represent the native Christian population, are at one with them in this opinion. As to the foreign residents, so early as 1883, 2,600 of the European inhabitants of Alexandria and other towns, representing almost all the European wealth and enterprise of the country, including not only Greeks, Italians, Germans and Austrians but even some Frenchmen—at a time when France was bitterly opposed to English policy—presented a petition to Lord Dufferin, then the British High Commissioner in Egypt, praying that the British Occupation might be permanent. At the same time, a similar desire was expressed in a memorandum from the American Missionary Society, the most "widely spread and most beneficient of all the foreign agencies engaged in the diffusion of education on the banks of the Nile."*

Unable to undermine British influence with the natives of India and Egypt by the above-mentioned methods, the enemies of England have expended their ingenuity during the last year in the publication of libellous statements with regard to the occupation of these countries and the methods by which they are being administered. It is represented in these publications, which are disseminated broadcast in the neutral countries, that England has prolonged her occupation of Egypt from year to year in violation of solemn promises which she gave to the other Powers

*Lord Cromer, "Modern Egypt."

that she would evacuate it as soon as the Arabi rebellion had been quelled, and that the administration of the country has been conducted from the beginning to the present date with a view to England's own selfish interests, and not to those either of the country itself or the world in general. Nothing has been left unsaid which might redound one way or another to the discredit of the Khedive's English advisers.

There is one incident in particular to which a separate German illustrated pamphlet has been devoted, and that is the story of Denshawai. The neutrals are gravely informed in this brochure that a number of innocent fellaheen were hanged, and others flogged almost to death, for having seized some English soldiers who were shooting pigeons in their villages. It is admitted, however, that the incident brought about the death of one of these officers indirectly, seeing that he succumbed to the effect of a sunstroke while running to get assistance. The judges, who heard the evidence and imposed the sentence, are represented as bloodthirsty butchers; but the fact is omitted that the court was composed in part of native Egyptians, one of whom (the President) was the Minister of Justice, as also the fact that the medico-legal expert of the Egyptian Government stated in his evidence that the sunstroke, which caused the death of the officer, was induced by the blows he had received from the villagers on whom the sentence was passed. We do not

deny that the sentence was unduly severe. Lord Cromer, who was absent from Egypt at the time, was of that opinion, but fair play demands that the full facts should be stated, and not only those which are calculated to bring odium on the English administration. We know, however, that Germany shrinks from no methods by which she may gain her objects.

The truth about the circumstances of the English occupation of Egypt and of her administration of the country have been described in many books as well as official publications to which the German writers might have had recourse, had accuracy been their aim. I propose to give a short summary of the facts drawn from these sources and based at the same time on personal experience.

When the Egyptian Government proved unable to suppress the rising which took place in 1882, under the leadership of Arabi Pasha, the English and French fleets were sent to Alexandria, and a massacre of the Christian residents of the town having ensued, the forts were bombarded on the 1st of July. The Sultan of Turkey was then asked to send troops to quell the revolt. As he refused to do so, the British Government invited France to co-operate with England to this end. The French Government declined, as did also the Italian Government, whereupon England landed troops, and the revolt was finally suppressed by the battle of Tell

el Kebir on the 13th of September, 1882. Arabi Pasha was put on his trial and condemned to death, but by the intervention of Lord Dufferin, his sentence was commuted to banishment.*

As soon as order had been re-established, Lord Dufferin drew up a long report, laying down the general lines on which, in his opinion, good government and prosperity might be restored to the country. In January, 1884, Sir Evelyn Baring (Lord Cromer) was appointed Consul-General and Diplomatic Agent, and to him fell the task of carrying out the reforms suggested by Lord Dufferin.

There can be no doubt that the intention of the British Government at that time was simply to restore the power of the Khedive, re-establish order, and withdraw the British troops as soon as this had been done. As Lord Granville explained in a circular to the Powers, the position of England in Egypt imposed on her "the duty of giving advice with the object of securing that the order of things to be established shall be of a satisfactory character and possess the elements of stability and progress."

The date of this circular was January 3rd, 1883, and it is clear that, at the time it was written, it was the intention of England to take no active part in the administration of Egyptian affairs, and to withdraw the Army of Occupa-

*He was interned in Ceylon, and was allowed to return to Egypt in the year 1901.

tion as soon as the object mentioned in Lord Granville's despatch had been achieved. But England believed that she had an easier task before her than was soon proved to be the case. Lord Milner has explained the situation very clearly: "I feel bound," he says, "to put the question whether the fact that English policy now commands the sympathy both of the resident Europeans and of the Powers is not the best answer to the charge so often flung in our faces that we have broken faith with Europe. I should be the first to admit the formal discrepancy between the repeated statement of British Ministers and the policy which, as a matter of fact, Great Britain has been compelled to pursue, but I deny that this is any proof of bad faith. We misunderstood the situation at the outset. When we first went to Egypt we believed, and it was natural that we should believe, that the duty before us was a comparatively simple one. We thought all we had to do was to put down a military rebellion. Only actual experience of the internal condition of Egypt could teach us that the rebellion was the least part of the matter, and that the real difficulty lay in the utter rottenness of the whole fabric of government."*

But the discrepancy is not a real one. We must, in justice, acknowledge that to every declaration, made from time to time by English Ministers, to the effect that the occupying troops should

*"England in Egypt," by Alfred Milner, p. 338.

be withdrawn, has been added a proviso that order must first be firmly re-established in the country. This condition is carefully omitted in most of the pro-German publications alluded to above. The Army of Occupation has been considerably reduced since the events of 1882, but there have been, from time to time, clear indications that, had it been removed altogether, the country would speedily have returned to its original state of chaos.

FINANCE.

The first matter which occupied the attention of Sir Evelyn Baring, in his capacity of Adviser to the Egyptian Government, was the condition of the finances. In 1879 that Government had declared itself bankrupt. When Ismail became Khedive in 1863, the debt of Egypt was only a little over £3,000,000; the revenue of the country was sufficient to meet the needs of its expenditure. By the end of 1876, however, owing to the extravagance of that ruler, it had risen to £89,000,000, while further debts were still being contracted, and taxes extorted from the fellaheen, with the help of the *kurbash**. The charge on the revenues of the country for the services of the debt amounted to £E3,410,000,† ex-

*A strip of rhinoceros hide worked up in the form of a whip.

†The Egyptian pound (£E.) is equivalent to about one pound and sixpence sterling.

clusive of the tribute due to Turkey, the expenses of the Suez Canal and other charges, which brought it up to nearly £E4,500,000. The taxation of the land had been increased about 50 per cent. An instance is given by Lord Cromer* of the methods employed under Ismail Pasha for the extraction of taxes from the native population. In a case, he said, that came under his personal observation: "A *Mudir*† was in the habit of causing a burning rag, steeped in spirits of wine, to be held close to the mouth of a recalcitrant taxpayer who then received a blow in the chest, the consequence of which was that, the air being expelled from his lungs, he was obliged to take a deep breath to refill them. The flame was thus drawn into his mouth. The official who was guilty of this particular act of barbarity was by no means a bad specimen of his class."

In spite of the heavy indebtedness of the country when England undertook to re-establish order, some money had to be found before a start could be made, and the difficulty of obtaining it was enhanced by the circumstance that, owing to the political situation, a loan could not be raised without the consent of the other Powers. At length, by the London Convention of 1885, Egypt was empowered to borrow a sum of

*"Modern Egypt."

†Governor of a Province.

£9,000,000. It was most wisely decided to use the £1,000,000, which remained at the disposal of the Government, after the victims of Arabi's revolt had been indemnified for irrigation works which, by increasing the area of cultivable land, would bring a profitable return; and the result of this measure surpassed all expectations. It was the beginning of Egypt's regeneration, raising her from the slough into which she had fallen.

In 1883, the first complete year of the British administration, the revenue was slightly under £9,000,000, from which time it steadily rose, until in 1890, the figure of £10,000,000 was exceeded. In 1897 it rose to over £11,000,000. The rise was continued with ever-increasing rapidity, until, in 1901 and 1902, a revenue of close on £12,000,000 was collected in spite of the fact that, during the latter of these two years, the Nile flood was one of the lowest on record. In 1903 the revenue amounted to £12,500,000 and in 1904 to nearly £14,000,000. And yet, during this period, the amount of direct taxation remitted reached £E1,900,000 per year, and arrears of land-tax to the extent of £E1,245,000 had been cancelled. As regards indirect taxation, the salt tax had been reduced by 4 per cent., the postal, railway and telegraph rates lowered and the octroi duties and bridge and lock dues abolished. The only increase of taxation had been on tobacco, on which the duty

was raised from P.T.14 to P.T.20* per kilogram. At the same time, the house-duty had, with the consent of the Powers, been imposed on European residents. In 1913, the receipts, ordinary and extraordinary, reached the figure of £E17,703,898, in spite of the land-tax having been reduced thirty per cent. in some of the provinces; and it must not be forgotten that the abolition of the corvée in 1889 necessitated the diversion of a large sum of money for the payment of labour which was formerly without remuneration. Before many years had passed, the burden of the National Debt was lightened by a successful conversion, while within the first twenty-three years a reduction of £E9,000,000 had been effected in the capital.

TRADE.

Meanwhile the trade of the country was rapidly developing. In 1889 the value of the exports was nearly £E12,000,000. Only two years later, in spite of the low prices then prevailing, it was £E13,878,000. After twenty-three years of administration under English guidance, it reached £E34,574,321, an increase of £E5,975,330 over the value of those of the previous year. The value of the imports rose, in the same period, from £E7,000,000 to £E27,227,118. The re-

*The piastre tarif (P.T.) is equivalent to about 2½d.

ceipts in 1889, excluding the tobacco duty, were £E585,000; in 1912, they were £E3,633,757. It should be noted that the increase in the value of the imports was, in great measure, in those commodities which are representative of prosperity, such as clothing, building material, etc. In the period 1887 to 1902 the import trade of the country had already nearly doubled.

Nor did England alone benefit from this increase of trade. On the contrary, while the percentage of the value of imports from Great Britain and France declined during the above-mentioned period, Germany's import trade with Egypt rose from 1 per cent. to over 3 per cent. At the same time Egyptian exports to Great Britain decreased 11 per cent., while those to Germany and the United States increased 6 per cent.

This development of trade has procured to all classes of the Egyptian community the enjoyment of the profit of their labour. The cotton crop, which is the most important of all the products of Egypt—and indeed her existence itself almost depends upon it—representing, as it does, more than two-thirds of her exports and about one third of her whole agricultural wealth, rose from 3,000,000 *kantars** in 1886, to 3¼ millions, in 1889; to more than 4,000,000 in 1890 and more than 4½ in 1891. Thus the net result of improved irrigation in that short period alone was to increase

*The kantar = 100 lbs.

the amount of this great staple of agriculture by about 50 per cent.

The 1913 crop, although it did not come up to the expectations founded on favourable weather conditions and the comparative immunity from parasites, was estimated, as stated by Lord Kitchener in his report for that year, at over 7½ million kantars. Compare these figures with those that were reached before the English Occupation; for instance, in the year 1878, the crop did not exceed 1,700,000. The average value of the crop between 1897 and 1905 was over £E14,000,000; the quantity exported in 1907 was valued at £E23,598,000.

IRRIGATION.

This increase was, of course, due to the larger area placed under cultivation. It is well known that Egypt owes her very existence to the soil deposited in the desert lying between Assouan and the Mediterranean by the Nile, and the greater the extent of country over which the waters can be spread, the greater the amount of crops which it is possible to raise in any given year. The ancient Egyptians carried out important works, displaying considerable engineering skill, by which the water was stored in basins and distributed over the country by means of canals; and similar works were carried out in later days. But when the country fell under

the dominion of the Turks, these works were neglected, owing to the absence of engineering talent, and many were altogether abandoned or left unrepaired. During the French Occupation and as long as the French influence lasted, efforts were made to increase the amount of land under cultivation. Amongst other works, a great barrage was built in 1862 by which the supply of water in Lower Egypt was largely increased, but during the latter part of the reign of Ismail Pasha this work had become practically useless, no money being available for its repair. After the English Occupation, a number of engineers of great experience were brought from India, the irrigation of the country was again seriously taken in hand, and each year more and more land has been reclaimed and rendered capable of cultivation. This is how it came about that before that Occupation had lasted many years, the cotton crop was trebled, and the sugar crop more than trebled. Within a short period new canals were built and the country was gradually covered with a network of light railways and agricultural roads which enabled the produce to be expeditiously and cheaply brought to market. In 1883 it was proposed to replace the barrage by pumping engines, at an initial expenditure of £E700,000 and an annual expenditure of £E250,000 but, at Sir Colin Scott Moncrieff's suggestion, it was decided to repair it and this was done at an expenditure of £E460,000 and an annual cost of

£E30,000.

In later years a second barrage was built at Assouan at a cost of £2,000,000. It was completed in 1902 and was subsequently raised, at a cost of £1,200,000. The original dam stored 980,000,000 cubic metres of water which was increased, when it was heightened, to 2,420,000,000 cubic metres. As Lord Kitchener says in one of his Reports, this structure indeed forms a lasting and brilliant tribute to the genius of Sir Benjamin Baker, who designed the scheme of the dam.

By means of these barrages the area of cultivated land, or land in process of cultivation, had already risen in 1906 to 5,750,000 acres, and the country is now secured against the dangers attendant on an excessively high or an excessively low Nile.

Other similar works are in contemplation south of Assouan, and there is good reason to believe that one day the waters of the Nile, from the lakes in Central Africa to the Mediterranean, will have been so brought under control that every metre of the land within reasonable distance of the river will be available for cultivation.

Although, owing to the condition in which Ismail had left the country and the lack of money, it was not to be expected that much could be done immediately to develop the resources of the country, the increase in the amount of agricultural produce, which quickly followed the English Occupation, has worked a complete transformation

in the conditions of the fellaheen. Lord Milner is right in saying that "every year since 1884 has seen some fresh district restored to fertility and in some cases brought for the first time under cultivation, in consequence of the patient, intelligent, unwearying work which Egypt has learnt to expect from the heads of the Irrigation Service and never expects in vain." No one who has the welfare of the country at heart can fail to concur with this appreciation of the English efforts to restore it to prosperity and develop to the utmost its resources. And it must be remembered, to the credit of the English engineers, that the difficulties with which they had to contend, were such as to appear at the outset almost insurmountable. Money had to be obtained at a time when the country, as we have seen, was bankrupt, and prejudices of all kinds had to be overcome. It was necessary, amongst other things, to establish a system of rotation during low Nile, a system which was particularly obnoxious to the large and influential landowners who had been accustomed to receive an undue supply of water, to the prejudice of the poorer proprietors.

If any Englishman is popular in this country, it is the engineer who is engaged in the distribution of the water. He is so generally respected that the villagers will often look to him for the settlement of disputes among themselves even unconnected with his official work.

JUSTICE.

Before the English Occupation, it must be admitted, no Courts worthy of the name existed for the native population. What judges there were, were appointed by favour and had no special knowledge or qualification. The *kurbash* was employed on all occasions by way of punishment or to obtain payment of taxes. Torture was freely applied for the purpose of extorting confessions or the evidence of witnesses. Special Commissions existed for the suppression of brigandage. Many persons who were brought before them were condemned to penal servitude on the flimsiest evidence or on no evidence whatever. They were presided over by the Governors of the provinces and were independent of the tribunals.

Soon after Lord Dufferin came to Egypt the use of the *kurbash* was forbidden. It was not long before the Commissions were abolished and, as to the tribunals themselves, the existing procedure was simplified and accelerated and a system of inspection and control was established. Incompetent judges were replaced by men who had received a thorough legal education and a School of Law was established in Cairo. This School is divided into two sections, in one of which the instruction is given in French, in the other in English. But in both cases it is the French law which is mainly taught owing to the

fact that the Egyptian Codes are based on the Napoleonic Code. Pupils who attend these schools obtain a thorough training in the various branches of French law, as far as it is applied in the Egyptian Courts, and are, at the same time, instructed in the Mussulman law as applied in the native *Mahkamahs* or religious tribunals, and they have to pass severe examinations before they can be elected to any judicial post.

It stands to reason that, owing to the existence of these schools, not only is the standard of the personnel of the native tribunals and Court of Appeal greatly raised, but the character and attainments of the men who plead at the Bar are very different from what they were in the old days.

The administration of justice in Egypt has always been a complicated matter owing to the existence of the capitulations. In addition to the native tribunals and the purely Mussulman Courts, which deal exclusively with matters concerning the personal status of Moslems, there are the Mixed Courts, which hear civil cases between persons of different nationalities, and the Consular Courts, which decide civil suits between foreigners of the same nationality, and criminal cases where the accused is subject to their jurisdiction. The confusion which arises from these concurrent systems is easily imaginable. It may happen that of several persons accused of participating in a particular crime one or more is a native and others foreigners of different nation-

alities. In such a case the native has to be tried by the Native Courts and each of the foreigners by the Consular Court under whose jurisdiction he falls.

Legislation which affects the foreigner is also a very difficult matter. Before any law of importance, which concerns his interests, can be passed, it must have the consent of fourteen or fifteen European Powers, and in the earlier days of the Occupation, the rivalry between some of these often caused an obstruction to the promulgation of any such law. We may remark in passing, however, that it seldom happened that either Germany or Austria stood in the way. On the contrary, they recognised the good will of the British advisers, and were among the first to assist them in their endeavour to carry any measures which they desired to introduce in the interests of the residents of Egypt.

In spite of these difficulties, and in spite, it must be said, of the avowed opposition of the Egyptian Prime Minister of the moment, from the time that Sir John Scott was appointed Judicial Adviser to the Khedive, improvements in the administration of justice, as far as it concerns the Native and the Mixed Courts, have been carried out from year to year. But, owing to the circumstances above-mentioned, the efforts of the English reformers have mostly been confined to the introduction of reforms in the native tribunals. When these latter were first established, every little

case, even of the utmost insignificance, involving, perhaps, the infliction of a fine of a few piastres, could be brought to the Court of Appeal, which consisted of five judges. At the present day there are numerous summary courts throughout the country which give final decisions in matters of small importance and, where an appeal lies against their decisions, it goes to the district tribunal and not to the Court of Appeal. The latter is occupied with appeals from the local tribunals only, and Courts of Assizes have been established which deal finally with the worst forms of crime. The Court of Appeal is now composed partly of native and partly of European judges, and three only sit to hear the cases brought to it, instead of five, as formerly.

Owing to these reforms, the administration of justice is now carried on both conscientiously and expeditiously to the incalculable advantage of all concerned, and no doubt, under present circumstances, we may hope to see radical and beneficial improvements in the system of tribunals which deal with cases where the litigants are of different nationalities. We may even look forward to a day, in the near future, when all the various systems will be amalgamated into one. This will indeed be a triumph for the English Advisers.

EDUCATION.

Education is another matter which was seriously taken in hand in the early days of the Occupation.

At that time not more than £E70,000 were devoted to this object. By 1906 that amount had risen to £E305,000. In 1913 £E282,000 were expended by the Provincial Councils alone on education, including £E182,000 on elementary vernacular and industrial schools and £E69,000 on primary and higher education. In elementary education the Councils had then under their control 1911 elementary schools in which 57,175 children were receiving instruction. In all, there were about 10,000 of these schools scattered over the country. Not many years ago education was practically confined to boys, but at last the reluctance of parents to send their girls to school has been in great measure overcome. 29 of the 1911 schools mentioned above are exclusively for girls and their attendance had risen by degrees to 6,322 in 1913. The teaching staff of those 1911 schools alone consisted of 2,107 men and 49 women. As regards primary education, the Provincial Councils were at the same time maintaining 43 Higher Schools for boys and 10 for girls and financially assisting 20 private Higher Schools for boys and 5 for girls. 28 per cent. of the pupils received their education free. The number of boys on the roll of the Primary Schools under the direct management of the Ministry of Public Instruction in 1913 was 7,119. At the same time, continual progress has been made in the Government Secondary Schools. In 1911 there were five of these attended by 2,160

boys; in 1912 the number rose to 2,485 and, in 1913 to 2,532. During the same period the number of boys attending private Egyptian Secondary Schools reached 2,800. The total number of Egyptians in all schools of this class, including those attending the foreign Secondary Schools, was then about 6,300. Some of these pupils continue their studies after leaving the Secondary Schools, at Government Colleges, at private schools or even abroad.

Special schools have been established in various parts of the country for the purpose of imparting agricultural, technical and commercial education. I have already spoken of the Law School now long since opened in Cairo. In 1912, there were 453 students in the Agricultural Schools, as compared with 356 in the previous year. Farm Schools have also been started in this connection, and the desire for education in this branch is so great that it is difficult to meet the demand for trained teachers. The School of Agriculture at Giza now ranks as a College. It contained in 1912, 183 students, 23 of whom qualified for the diploma in that year. There were, in 1912, 23 Technical Schools with 3,177 pupils, as compared with 21 schools and 2,953 pupils in 1911. Carpentry and all branches of mechanics and engineering are taught there. In addition to these, a number of Trade Schools, maintained by Provincial Councils or by private societies, are inspected and assisted by the Department of

Technical Education. There is a School of Art at Cairo, with over 100 pupils, at which instruction is given in sculpture, decoration, painting and architecture. The number of pupils at the School of Medicine at Cairo is yearly increasing and the instruction given there places it on a level with many of the best schools in the European capitals.

Compulsory education is a thing as yet unknown, but the yearly increase of attendance, to which I have drawn attention, shows that education is becoming more and more popular amongst the population, as the opportunities grow wider.

THE ARMY.

There existed before the Occupation a native Egyptian Army. But its condition was such as to betray its Turkish origin. The pay of the officers was always in arrear, so that they were encouraged to provide for their necessities by dishonest means. The barracks, in which the men were housed, were of the worst description and no steps were taken to alleviate the suffering of the sick and wounded. In order to escape conscription, large numbers of the population were in the habit of maiming or blinding themselves in early youth. There is no need to describe in detail the various reforms which have been carried out in the organisation of the Egyptian Army, since those times. They are eloquently

illustrated by the following quotations, the first from a telegram of General Baker describing the defeat of the Egyptian Army at El Teb on the road to Tokar on February 5th, 1884, and the second from a Report by Colonel Holled-Smith describing the victory, also of the Egyptian Army, at Afafit on the road to Tokar on February 19th, 1891:—

(1) "On the square being only threatened by a small force of enemy, certainly less than a thousand strong, the Egyptian troops threw down their arms and ran, allowing themselves to be killed without the slightest resistance. More than 5,000 killed, all material lost."

(2) "The main body of the dervishes were 50 yards from our front line and were extending to the right and left to envelop the position. The bulk of their force was directed against the line occupied by the 12th Battalion, their attack being pushed home with their usual intrepidity and fearlessness. The troops, however, stood their ground and did not yield one inch throughout the line."

It was in both cases "the same attacking enemy," as Lord Milner has remarked, in quoting the above passages, "the dervishes, who fight without fear; the same circumstances, no British soldiers; the same fellaheen soldiers trained by English officers."

It was this reformed army which, under the leadership of General Grenfell, overthrew

the hordes of Wad el Negumi, who were descending upon Egypt from the Sudan. There can be little doubt that, but for this victory at Toski, on August 3rd, 1889, Cairo would have been subjected sooner or later to an invasion of savages from the South, as it was at an earlier period of Egyptian history.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

Sir Guyer Hunter, after visiting the Egyptian hospitals in 1883, made the following comment: "The hospitals," he said, "are in a more or less tumble-down, dirty condition, impregnated with foul odours and containing beds filthy in the extreme. They are, in fact, noisome places utterly unfit for the reception of human beings . . . the medical administration is simply deplorable."

To-day there are in Egypt 22 General Hospitals under the management of the Department of Public Health, and their condition compares favourably with that of any in Europe, in cleanliness and general organisation. They are equipped with a staff of trained nurses, and dispensaries are attached to them where the poor can obtain gratuitous treatment. The number of patients treated free of charge in 1913 was 40,281 as compared with 31,946 in 1912. In districts where no Government dispensaries exist the medical officers are supplied with drugs and first-aid dressings in order that they may treat the poor without payment.

It is well-known that ophthalmia was, not many years ago, one of the worst plagues of Egypt. Special hospitals have now been established for the treatment of this disease. By 1912, 13 were at work in various parts of the country and 4 were in course of construction. During 1913, 25,000 patients were cured and a larger number examined and treated, and more than 9,000 persons presented themselves for advice who were blind in one or both eyes. In the hope of finally delivering the country from this scourge, a careful system of inspection and treatment is being carried out. In every town, where there is a Government Ophthalmic Hospital, the Infant Schools are examined. Anyone who has lived in Egypt for a certain number of years, or has revisited it in recent times, cannot fail to acknowledge the inestimable benefit which has been conferred on the country by the liberality of Sir Ernest Cassel, who, by his donations, assisted the campaign against ophthalmia when it was first undertaken, and applaud the energy with which it is being conducted.

The general state of Public Health has much improved throughout the country, but in matters of sanitation our reformers have met with no little opposition among the lower classes of the population, in their ignorant interpretation of the precepts of the Koran, which, rightly understood, teaches that cleanliness is next to righteousness. Filtered water supplies are being

provided in the majority of the large towns and elsewhere the drinking water is being freed as much as possible from pollution; and if the inhabitants continue to drink contaminated water it is their own fault when they suffer by so doing. Meanwhile, a staff of bacteriologists is studying the nature and origin of the various diseases which infest the country and the best means of stamping them out, or at least weakening the sources of infection. A large staff of veterinary surgeons is attached to the Public Health Department, and cattle plague as well as human pestilences has been taken successfully in hand.

PRISONS.

With regard to this item, it is sufficient to say that, in 1883, their condition was described as abominable and barbarous, while to-day they must be described as model establishments, as anyone may see by visiting them. Indeed, there is a danger of crime being encouraged by the desire to obtain a lodging there. The prisoners are instructed in all kinds of handicrafts and the wares which they produce are sold to the public. Where possible, they are kept well-exercised and the hygienic conditions are perfect.

PUBLIC WORKS.

We have already spoken of the most important of these under the heading of Irrigation. We

need do no more than allude to the numerous works of utility, including the macadamised roads, which are yearly constructed. We will content ourselves with mentioning, by way of example, the principal buildings which were under construction in the year preceding the war. They included:—

A Secondary School at Tanta.
Additions to the Lunatic Asylum at Khanka.
Training College for Girls at Bulaq.
New Roofs to the Egyptian Museum.
A Hospital at Qena.
Tribunal at Assiut.
Secondary School at Assiut.
Prison at Benha.

In the same year £E15,000 were spent by the Committee for the Preservation of Arab Monuments, and a number of mosques were repaired.

RAILWAYS, POST AND TELEGRAPHS.

These items need not detain us. The railway receipts had reached in 1889 the sum of £E1,301,000. By 1891 there had been an increase of 25 per cent. In 1913 they reached the figure of £E3,819,000. In 1890 the Egyptian railways carried 4,700,000 passengers and 1,683,000 tons of goods; in 1906 22,550,000 passengers and 20,036,000 tons of goods. The increase has been constantly maintained.

Nothing could better illustrate the enormous improvement in the material condition of the country. At the same time, there has been an immense augmentation of the number of inland letters and telegrams. In 1913, 87,000,000 letters, cards, etc., passed through the post, being an increase of 6½ per cent. on the preceding year. This, it must be recognised, is no small number, considering the still small percentage of persons able to read and write.

The above is a very summary sketch of the benefits which no person with an impartial mind can deny have been bestowed upon the country during the last thirty-four years. There is now equal justice for all; a Pasha is just as liable to imprisonment as the poorest inhabitant of the country. The slave traffic is at an end; at least, anyone who engages in it has to reflect that he is exposing himself to the severest punishment. Even domestic slavery is likely soon to be a thing of the past.

Steps have been taken in the direction of educating the people to govern themselves. Municipalities have been established in fifteen towns and districts, and there are about forty Local Commissions. A Legislative Assembly, to which new laws and modifications of old laws are submitted, and a General Assembly, have, as

is well known, existed since the early days of the British Occupation.

And these reforms have been carried out in the face of difficulties which no one living outside the country is able to realise. In the first place there was the difficulty of procuring the necessary funds. It was impossible to draw on the Reserve Fund without the consent of the Caisse de la Dette, or to exceed the limit of expenditure without the consent of the Powers. A loan even could not be raised without the consent of Turkey. It was only when, in 1904, the Anglo-French Agreement was concluded, and the control of the Caisse de la Dette was practically abolished, that the Egyptian Government was able to profit in full measure by the financial prosperity of the country. All kinds of prejudices had to be overcome; visitations of plague and cholera had to be met; unusually high or low Niles had to be controlled. Lord Milner has justly remarked that the reforms have not been carried out owing to good luck but in spite of bad luck, and there can be no greater libel than to say that in bringing order out of chaos—in transforming the darkness of the latter years of Ismail's reign into the comparative light of these days—the English Advisers have sought their own interests, to the disadvantage of others. We have already said that natives as well as foreigners have benefited by them. From a question of a supply of stationery to one of the Government Offices to